3. श्री एम एस. गुरुपदस्वामी
4. श्री जसवत सिंह
5. डा (श्रीमती) सरोजिनी महिषी
6. श्री गुलाम रसूल मट्टू
7. श्री अश्विनी कुमार
8. श्री राम चन्द्र विकल
9. श्री निर्मल चटर्जी
10. श्री चतुरानन मिश्र
11. श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव

और उसे आगामी सत्र के प्रथम सप्ताह के अंतिम दिवस तक अपना प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत करने का अनुदेश दिया जाये।

The questions were proposed

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : We will have the discussion after lunch. Now the House stands adjourned for lunch and will meet again at 2.30 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty two minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty-three minutes past two of the clock, **The Vice-Chairman (Shri Jagesh Desai)** in the Chair.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Regarding situation in Fiji

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the current crisis in Fiji began on 14th May, 1987 when a handful of soldiers led by Col. Rabuka overthrew the popularly elected coalition Government of the Labour and National Federation Parties led by Dr Bavadra Col Rabuka moved again on September 25, 1987 at a time when the chances of national reconcilliation seemed bright and a formula for an interim bi-partisan government involving all political parties had been worked out The second coup dealt a severe blow to the hopes of reconcilliation The light of freedom has been dimmed in a beautiful pacific island, not for long, we hope and pray.

We have kept a close watch on the meloncholy developments in Fiji. Government's concern has been made known on a number of occasions. We have, in no uncertain terms disapproved of Rabuka's coups and condemned the racist overtones of his pronouncements.

Col. Rabuka's stated objective is to guarantee political supremacy for the indigenous Melanesian community. Some of the extremist groups believed to be supporting Col. Rabuka have made even more unreasonable demands These objectives can only be at the cost of the interests of the people of Indian origin.

While we consider that the first loyalty of ethnic Indians overseas is to the country of which they are citizens, we are responsive to their problems and cannot remain unconcerned when their safety and welfare are at stake. There are about 3,47,445 people of Indian origin constituting 48.6 per cent of the population of Fiji Besides, there are about 250 Indian nationals. The people of Indian origin have made a significant contribution to the development of that country Their contribution has been acknowledged by the ethnic Melanesian population. The constitution of 1970, which had been worked out after long and painstaking negotiations between the U.K. Government and all political parties in Fiji, was specially designed to safeguard the political interest, land ownership rights and other traditional rights of the Melanesians The constitution was itself a document tilted in favour of the Melanesian community. It was accepted in good grace by the people of the Indian origin and, as acknowledged by former Prime Minister Ratu Mara, the leader of the Alliance party which ruled Fiji for 17 years, it served Fiji well for 17 years in promoting racial harmony, stability and progress Its abrogation by the military regime has put the clock back; thus endangering the prospects of racial harmony, peace and prosperity in a country, where a multi-racial democracy was looked upon by the rest of the area as something of a model. This precious asset has been thrown away, and is in the process of being destroyed.

[Shri K. Natwar Singh]

In May my colleague Eduardo Faleiro visited Australia and New Zealand to discuss the Fiji problem with the Prime Ministers of those countries At the same time I visited London to have talks with the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffry Howe On the eve on the Commonwealth Summit I met Prime Ministers Hawke, Lange and Mugabe in Canberra, Wellington and Harare in this connection I also met President Kaunda of Zambia' in New York in early October Prime Minister addressed letters to several Commonwealth leaders

As for our nationals, we have made it clear to the Fijian authorities that their safety and welfare is the primary responsibility of the latter and we expect them to ensure that no harm will come to our nationals Whenever cases involving harassment of Indian nationals have come to notice, they have been promptly and effectively pursued by our Mission in Suva with the authorities

We have strongly and unequivocally condemn the actions of the military authorities in Fiji at various international forums. Speaking in the United Nations. General Assembly on 29-10-87, I said that attempts to deprive citizens of the country of their legitimate rights merely on the basis of their racial origin, were against all tenets of democracy and human rights and were contrary to the UN Charter . What we condemn in South Africa, we cannot condone in Fiji.

At the Commonwealth Summit in Vancouver Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said that adventurism in Fiji had shocked us by its casual and cavalier repudiation of every democratic value, its unacceptable racial overtones and the attempts to rule by fear and not by law Prime Minister demanded the restoration of democracy, harmony and civil rule in Fiji He also declared that inaction would be a mockery of all that the Commonwealth stood for

At Vancouver Fiji's membership of the Commonwealth was terminated. Fiji's re-admission is contingent upon its adherence to the principles that have guided the Commonwealth. These principles, among others, forbid discrimination on the ground of race

India has suspended trade and technical co-operation with Fiji We have recalled our High Commissioner in Suva to Delhi for consultations We have also, in a statement on October 10, 1987 categorically stated that we do not recognize any government established by Col Rabuka.

The situation is being kept under careful review and we may take further measures in the light of future developments

There is no inherent antagonism, no controversy between Government and our friends opposite about what is happening in Fiji All of us fervently hope that Fiji will return to democratic rule, when once again the multi-racial character and the legitimate rights of all its people regardless of race, religion or colour, are assured and safe-guarded

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI) : There are about nine or ten speakers who want to seek clarifications At 3 o'clock we want to start the important discussion on the drought and flood situation in the country. Therefore, I would like the honourable Members and I would request all of them to ask very pointed questions seeking clarifications. Now, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, there are just two aspects only which I want to touch upon and I will come straight to the clarifications because I do recognise that we have a Short-Duration Discussion at 3 o'clock.

Sir, our honourable Minister has made a statement now. It is refreshing to note that the Foreign Office now a days comes forward to make a statement, while reading which, I come across sentences of unbureaucratic and refreshing lyricism. But I have some difficulties in understanding the Government of India's approach to this problem and, therefore, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable Minister to his own statement wherein he says—it is a very interesting statement and these are his own words—"Inaction would be a mockery of all that the Commonwealth stood for.", a phrase used during the Commonwealth meeting and it is precisely that which marks the Government

of India's approach to the whole problem in Fiji.

Now, Sir, the honourable Minister's statement otherwise is a real compendium of events which we are familiar with and, therefore, in that sense it only goes to add to the existing parliamentary archives. I would beg your permission, Sir, to ask of the Minister about the intriguing aspect of what appears to be the Government of India's relative inaction on the question of Fiji. It is vital to remember that on an issue like this, where the interests of 48 per cent of the population of that country which is of Indian origin are involved, even any appearance of inaction is disturbing. I would, therefore, like to ask the honourable Minister: Would he settle once and for all the controversy which arises from the US-declared interests in Fiji, the actions that the United States of America has taken in Fiji—and I do not have to inform the honourable Minister because he has much more information than I have—from the visits of personages like Admiral Walter Vernon, from the loss of the Pacific Island, Vanuatu.

SHRI K NATWAR SINGH: He is Vernon Walters.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: He is Vernon Walters? I thought it was the other way round. They do have strange names, the Americans they are most readily interchangeable also

Now, because of these thing and the loss of this Island and its significance for Fiji, the US-declared interests—the visits by and the pronouncements of the Admiral were made public and they are no secret—a suspicion has arisen A suspicion has arisen because of the US-declared interests in Fiji and the appearance of Government of India's relative inaction in the matter that there has been some kind of a trade-off between the United States of America and India, between Fiji and Sri Lanka Now, this is something which is being mentioned and, therefore, it would be a useful opportunity for the honourable Minister to still this controversy once for all by throwing much greater light on the US action and on what the Government of India, itself is doing.

Sir, we have been informed that we have discontinued trade with Fiji I suppose we could not have done much else. Now, what are the trade figures? What was the annual trade? What percentage did our trade with Fiji constitute of the total overseas trade of Fiji, as trade from India? That would give us an idea as to whether our discontinuance of the trade is really going to have any effect or not. On the surface of it, it sounds a very grave action. But what actually will this action result in?

I want to seek three specific clarifications and make one recommendation. And they all arise from the hon Minister's statement I have cut out a lot of other things on which I wanted to seek clarifications.

Sir, in an aside, we really ought to have a debate on foreign policy The Government of India cleverly comes forward with a *suo motu* statement, avoiding a comprehensive debate. We then get fobbed off by having to limit ourselves to just asking clarifications coming back to Fiji.

Now, here is a mention made of the various travels which were undertaken by the Foreign Ministers and from the Ministry of External Affairs. Are you proposing any joint move with countries of Australosia, for instance, outside the forum of the United Nations and outside the forum of Commonwealth, because that region is also affected? Are you, therefore, contemplating any joint action with Australia or New Zealand? My second clarification, Sir, relates to Fiji and the Commonwealth Now, here mention was made that amongst the Commonwealth principles re-admission has the aspect of discrimination on grounds of race Therefore, will the Minister satisfy us, reassure us, that this is the interpretation of the Commonwealth also? The interpretation of the Government of India by itself does not carry reassurance. Is that how the Commonwealth also interprets recial discrimination? Would the Government of India be in a position to categorically inform us that Fiji shall not be re-admitted into the Commonwealth unless the interests of overseas, of expatriates of Indian origin, are safeguarded? My third question, Sir, is about Government of India not recognizing the Government of Col.

[Shri Jaswant Singh]

Rabuka This is not the principal question—It is really with a view to understanding the Government of India's policy and principles on how recognition is granted, to whom it is granted and why it is granted because, to my mind, Sir, the recognition of a Government is really not a conferment of any distinction upon it, it is merely the obtaining of a diplomatic convenience Therefore, I would like the Minister to throw light on it.

My last question A large number of Indians that live outside India, are of Indian origin and they live outside India largely as a consequence of imperial trade in bonded labour etc. Would, therefore, the Government of India consider instituting or establishing a department for overseas Indians to safeguard their interests? Thank you.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, my questions are straightforward. He has stated that the object is to guarantee, etc. He went on to described the stated objects. My question in this. Quite often the ethnic eruptions are symptoms and there are deep underlying causes. Jaswant Singhji, my valued friend, suggested one, In that context, my question is what really was the motivation behind this coup which took the cover of this ethnic violance? Secondly, I will like to know, and I want the House to be informed, that in paragraph 5 what he has mentioned is that he has met various leaders of different countries one after another. I want the House to be informed about the result Thirdly, there are symptoms of inaction, a point which Jaswant Singh Ji has already mentioned My question is only this If it is true that under the cover of ethnic disputes deep-lying causes of economic interests are operative, then will action also mean a campaign around the world that the basic reasons which lead to this kind of conflict are such and such and that they are associated with the exploitative nature of the western society? Will the Indian Government, as a part of its action, campaign in exposing this kind of social system and this kind of social evil?

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मान्यवर, मेरे केवल दो तीन प्रश्न हैं। मान्यवर, फिजी के विकास और निर्माण में जो लोग भारत से वहा सौ या 108 वर्ष पूर्व ले जाये गये थे, उनका हाथ रहा है। पहली दफा पिछली अप्रैल में भारतवशियो की सरकार बनी परन्तु मई में कर्नल रेबूका के नेतृत्व में तथाकथित सैनिक क्रांति हुई और सरकार का तख्ता पलट दिया गया। वहा आज भी नागरिक अधिकारों का हनन हो रहा है। मेरे इस सबध में दो तीन प्रश्न हैं चूकि समय बहुत कम है। एक तो यह है कि हाल ही में यह जानकारी हुई है कि वहा पर एक आदेश हुआ है कि रविवार के दिन सिवाय चर्चा के और किसी स्थान पर कोई भारतवशी फिजी नहीं जा सकता है। दूसरा वहा पर जो भारतीय परिवार हैं, करीब करीब 400 या 500 परिवार दूसरे देशो को पलायन कर रहे हैं। मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि इस पलायन को रोकने के लिये भारत सरकार क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है। तीसरा, मत्री जी के वक्तव्य में यह बताया गया है कि वहा के जो हाई कमिश्नर हैं उनको सलाह मश्विरे के लिए दिल्ली बुलाया गया है। यह दूसरा उदाहरण है जहां पर भारत नस्ल के लोगो के साथ नस्ल नाम पर न केवल भेदभावपूर्ण या उपेक्षापूर्ण व्यवहार हो रहा है बल्कि सभी को जानकारी है कि वहा पर एक विधिवत निर्वाचित सरकार को गिराया गया। वहां पर हमारे हाई कमिश्नर हैं। कर्नल रेबूका की सरकार को भारत सरकार ने मान्यता नही दी है लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि विरोध स्वरूप हमारे जो राजनयिक संबंध हैं उनको जारी रखने पर क्या सरकार पुन विचार करेगी?

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM (Tamil Nadu) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, it is the moral responsibility of this Government to safeguard the interests of Indians wherever they are. Therefore, with good intentions, the Government has taken some measures to protect and safeguard the interests of the Indians in Fiji. Firstly, India has refused to recognise Rabuka's Government It has suspended trade and technical cooperation with Fiji and it has used its good offices to expel the Fijians from the Commonwealth. We welcome these measures. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is their reaction after our taking these measures. I understand that Mr Bavadra, the former Prime Minister of Fiji and Mr. Hawke, the Prime Minister of Australia, even though they

have expressed their opinion against the military rule, have expressed some opinion in favour of amending the 1970 Constitution of Fiji, aimed at removing the apprehensions of the indigenous Fijians. I want to know whether this Government endorses the views of the former Prime Minister of Fiji and the present Prime Minister of Australia. Sir, the demands of Col. Rabuka are these. Firstly, ethnic Fijians should have majority in Parliament. Secondly, they should be given the Prime Ministership, the Ministership for External Affairs and the Interior Ministry Thirdly, Christianity should be declared as a State religion I would like to know the view of our Government in regard to these demands put forth by Col. Rabuka

Then, Sir, in protecting the interests of these Fijians, we have taken some prompt, effective and wise steps. If such steps had been taken in the case of Sri Lanka also, we could have avoided the death of so many thousands of Tamils. I would like to know what the reason is for such a discrimination because we exercised our good offices in the Commonwealth, and we have refused to recognise the Government We have done everything in the right direction but some constructive and comprehensive steps have not been taken in the case of the Tamils of Sri Lanka in the beginning Why has the Government failed to take such steps ? What is the reason for such a discrimination ?

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the unfortunate developments in Fiji have made the political destiny of the citizens of the Indian origin there a question mark. I would like to know from the hon Minister whether it is a fact that Col Rabuka is under great pressure from the Chiefs to restore ties with the Commonwealth and whether there is any move on the part of Col. Rabuka to approach the Queen with a request for the appointment of another Governor-General. Sir, the Vancouver Summit took a decision I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the British High Commissioner in Suva has declared that he would continue to be there in the same capacity, and if it is so, whether it is not a violation of the same decision that was taken in the Vancouver Summit Sir, may I know from the hon Minister the number of citizens of Indian origin who have migrated after the May 14 coup ? Sir, these citizens of Indian origin were taken by the British colonial government as plantation labour for sugarcane plantations. Now, Sir, this tragic story reminds me of another most unfortunate incident that took place 39 years ago when one million citizens of Indian origin, after 100 to 150 years, were thrown away by a single obnoxious legislation when they were made voteless and Stateless. Sir, at that time the Government of India did not make any protest against that. This is just a parallel that I am drawing. Sir, the statement here says that we have recalled our High Commissioner in Suva to Delhi for consultations. Now the fate of these citizens of Indian origin is in jeopardy. I would like to know whether the Government will send back our High Commissioner and also the level at which you are taking steps to protect their interests.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, according to the very statement of the hon. Minister, the percentage of the Indian origin population in Fiji is 48 6. It is a very significant number. The Government headed by Dr. Bavadra was a multi-racial Government which was toppled in April last Sir, according to the statement of Col. Rabuka, the multi-racial Government was toppled only to prevent the Indian majority from taking the Fijian land and trampling upon Fijian traditions and customs

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI) : One minute.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA : I am concluding, Sir I will take only two minutes. So, the primary target, the basic target, the only target I mean to say before Col Rabuka's Government is the Indians The people of Indian origin in Fiji are not citizens of India But our aim and our goal must be to protect their interests, they are the people of Indian origin. A vast section of Fijian population, that is about 48 per cent of the population are of Indian origin and they are their main target target of the present military Junta Government These people of Indian origin are going to be

[Shri Puttapaga Radhakrishna]

very adversely affected since we have no High Commissioner in that country, since we have no diplomatic contact with that Government, because we have not recognised that Government, and we do not know how the Government is going to protect the interests of these lakhs of people of Indian origin But they are the first target of the military Government there and we have no diplomatic machinery to deal with the situation.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI) : I seek the leave of the House to allow the clarifications.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Jammu and Kashmir) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, while I appreciate the stand taken by the Government of India on the Fijian issue, my approach to the problem is rather unorthodox and may be flabbergasting I was in Australia when this coup took place and we met a Senator in Australia who gave us a vivid description because he was in Fiji at the time the coup had taken place

It appears, Sir, that a lot of water has flown down the Ganga since even the Government has been formed. I have read a report only three days back in the newspaper that, may be, the previous Governor-General is going to be the President and the Prime Minister, Mara, may also join this Government. Is the Government aware of such a report? Has the Government any reports about this thing?

The second thing why I say that this is an unorthodox approach is because we have primarily to safeguard the interests of these four lakhs of people. Our initial reaction that we should recall our Ambassador, that we should do this and we should do that and we should disconnect our trade ties, that is all right, that was desirable and necessary, but now in the long-range interests of these four lakhs of people, our presence there is very essential. I would suggest—and we would be getting the reaction of the hon. Minister—that we should send back our High Commissioner to Fiji. May be, we do not recognise the Government for the time being But the High Commissioner there will be a Central authority and he will have a finger on the pulse of the situation and he will know developments from day to day, so that at the appropriate time when a situation arises, we can have a say in getting something out of that situation to safeguard the interests of these people who are there. This approach is on the same lines as I had stated at the time of the constitution of the Bofors' committee that it is better for the opposition to be in the fray rather than outside the fray. That is my personal view and that is why I say that it is an unorthodox approach that our presence should be there. It may be assertive at the time of the decision making, more particularly so if the reports that the Governor-General is going to be the President and the former Prime Minister is going to be included, are correct. I would like to know the reaction of the hon Minister to these things.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry) : It is a matter of pride for India who was responsible for removing Fiji from the Commonwealth and it was followed by other countries, Australia, New Zealand and others. The reaction of U.K. has been that in the initial coup in May, 1987, they interfered in the matter and the Governor-General was put in the office and on the second occasion, the attitude of U.K. was hostile, and I would like to have a clarification from the hon Minister. The U.K. High Commissioner in Fiji is still continuing but India, Australia and New Zealand have withdrawn their diplomats from there This is in violation of the Commonwealth rules. I would like from the hon Minister to know whether any protest was lodged by our Government for violation of the Commonwealth convention by the U.K. Government Secondly, as the hon. Minister has said on page 3 of his statement that whatever be the grievances of the Indian nationals who are still in Fiji, those grievances have been promptly and effectively pursued by our Mission in Suva with the authorities concerned. I would like to know how many Indians have complained to our High Commission there and what was the action taken by the Indian Government to safeguard the interests of Indians who are living there

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र (बिहार) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं सरकार से जानना चाहूंगा कि जब अखबारों में यह बात आई है, हमारे देश के अखबारों में भी और विदेशों के अखबारों

में भी, कि यह तख्ता-पलट जो हुआ फिजी में, यह अमरीका की साजिश के चलते हुआ। हमारे मंत्री बात करते हैं कामन-वैल्थ के लोगों से, इंगलैण्ड के लोगों से, अफ्रीका के लोगों से, क्यों नहीं सीधे उस यमराज से बात करते हैं, जो दुनिया के दूसरे देशों में तख्ता पलटने के लिए लगा है, अमरीका से, अभी तक हमारी सरकार ने बात क्यों नहीं की? अगर बातचीत हुई तो क्या नतीजा निकला ?

दूसरा प्रश्न मेरा यह है कि आस्ट्रेलिया, न्यूजीलेंड के जो ट्रेड-यूनियन हैं, उन्होंने फैसला लिया है कि फिजी के लिए वे जो माल भेजने का है, उसको लोड या अनलोड नहीं करेंगे, बायकाट करेंगे। तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या हमारी सरकार ने आई. सी. एफ. टी. और डब्लू. एफ. टी. य., जो दुनिया के मुख्य मजदूर संगठन हैं, उनसे वार्तालाप किया है कि उन्होंने माल का बायकाट किया है या नहीं ?

तीसरी बात, जहां तक अभी हमारे एक मित्र ने कहा कि हमारे हाई-कमीश्नर को वहां भेजना चाहिए मैं समझता हूं कि एक बार आपने वापस ले लिया है तो बिना कोई नतीजा लिए आप भेज देते हैं तो उसका बहुत बुरा अर्थ होगा। इसलिए कोई ऐसा काम मत कीजिए, जिससे लोगों को लगे कि आप बेमतलब का झुक रहे हैं। यह नहीं होना चाहिए। यही मेरा प्रश्न है।

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : I am grateful to the hon Members for various question they have raised I will try to answer each one of them. First, I would thank Jaswant Singhji for the compliment he has paid to the drafting of the statement, to some sentence which caught his eye. I would not disclose the authorship but I am deeply touched by what he said. He said that there is appearance of inaction of the Government of India Since this coup occurred, we immediately asked for a report from our High Commissioner there. I would like to say that India today is the only country in the world which has openly said that what happened in Fiji in the last few months is racist in anture. I said in my statement that what we condemn in South Africa we cannot condone in Fiji. As far as I know, no other country has said so. There have been shades of opinion within the Pacific Region There have been differences of opinion among the Melanesians and Polynesians on the one side and Australia and New Zealand and some other Commonwealth countries on the other There has also been an attempt, which has not been made very clear but which was subtly being propagated, which the Prime Minister nailed at Vancouver. The subtle argument was that just as the whites are settlers in South Africa, the people of Indian origin are settlers in Fiji, turning the racist argument the other way round. That is why I went to meen P.M Mugabe and President Kaunda to place before them our viewpoint I do not want to disclose the discussions held by me with the heads of States. But they were fully sympathetic to our viewpoint I said that these are the people who have been living there for 120 years or more, who are citizens of Fiji and are being discriminated against on the ground of their race. If you were to take a narrow view, there are only 200 Indian nationals in Fiji. Nearly 350,000 are people of Indian origin who are Fijian citizens. Our position has been—this has been our stand since the days of Panditji—if an Indian elects to make another country, A, B, C or D his or her home, he should be loyal to that country. But they have naturally relations here and they have emotional family ties. We cannot be totally indifferent to their lot But such a situation had arisen in other parts of the world also It has happened in Uganda. It has happened in Kenya. Therefore, we have brought this to the attention of the world, particularly, to Australia and New Zealand who are next-door neighbours. Even these countries have very strict laws. Those Indians who want to leave Fiji do not get easy entry into these countries As on date, since July, 1987, out of 520 people who have migrated from Fiji, 453 a fair number have gone to Canada.

Now, we took up this question as a matter of principle. If this thing is permitted on racial lines within the Commonwealth, it is a very very serious matter. But even at the Commonwealth Summit, when the leaders met, when the heads of Governments met there were various points of views on this. There was certainly a view expressed that Fiji should continue as a member of the Commonwealth It was

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because of our strong stand that we took at the United Nations and at Vancouver that Fiji's membership was terminated

Hon. Members have asked whether there is any knowledge of U.S. involvement. We have also heard that Mr Vernon Walters visited Fiji in April, 1987, but we have not come across any concrete evidence of U.S. involvement in Fiji. As a matter of fact, they suspended aid and had initially disapproved of the coup that had taken place.

Hon. Members have also asked about a trade-off with the U S. on Sri Lanka and Fiji. Quite honestly, I am flabbergasted because this is the first time I have heard of it. There is no connection between the two at all.

We have very little trade with Fiji. I think, it was Mr Jaswant Singh who mentioned this. I will give the figures. The trade between India and Fiji is not very significant. You must realise that the total population of Fiji is seven and a half lakhs, which is half the size of a Lok Sabha constituency In 1985 exports to Fiji amounted to Rs. 6 4 crores and imports Rs 9,82,000. Indian's technical assistance to Fiji during 1985-86 was : I T E.C. Rs 1,49,000 and under Colombo Plan—Rs 2,73,000. We have three experts under I.T E.C., and one expert under Colombo Plan in Fiji. India's grant of scholarship to Fiji as follows : General culture scholarships—12, Commonwealth scholarships—5, Hindi Studies—6, Colombo Plan—12 There are approximately 100 Fijian students in India under the self-financing scheme

Now the suspension of trade and technical co-operation is merely symbolic, but I have the overall economic picture since the coup took place We see today that sugar output has been reduced, tourist arrivals have suffered, there has been a 10-13 per cent decline in the gross domestic product, the foreign exchange reserves have fallen, the rate of inflation has also gone up considerably and the inter-banking lending rates have risen between 21 to 23 per cent Therefore the picture is not at all bright

We have also to make sure what other countries do. Now the hon Members might have read that since our taking this stand—it is only 1 per cent of the total trade that we have, because it is a very small number, because of the number involved—some other countries are trying to get in. You might have read about French interest in Fiji, about Indonesian and Malaysian interests. We have got to watch this very carefully and play as we go along.

We have recalled our High Commissioner here for consultation. This is also to show our disapproval of what has happened there What has happened is that we do not recognise Col. Rabuka's government We recognise the State of Fiji. We have an office there. In the absence of the High Commissioner, his number two is looking after the mission there We keep in touch with the developments for day-to-day transaction of the business. This is not the first time that a Head of Mission has been recalled for consultation It is one of the means by which a country shows its disapproval Australians have done the same thing, New Zealanders have done the same thing.

A point was raised about the United Kingdom continuing their High Commissioner there and continuing to call him High Commissioner of U K., because once a country is not in the Commonwealth, then you have an ambassador there. High Commissioners are only to Commonwealth countries. When Pakistan ceased to be a member of the Commonwealth, we had an ambassador there. Till 1972, we used to have a High Commissioner there So if and when—I agree with Mishraji that we should not act with haste, unless we see how the situation unfolds itself in Fiji—he goes back, we will decide what nomenclature we have to give him But it is important that we should have a person in Fiji—(a) to watch the situation; and (b) to see to the welfare of our people and keep the pressure up How long other countries will do this, what will happen—because I have some experience of foreign affairs—the danger is, the longer the situation continues, the more the chance there is going to be of what one could call "creeping recognition"—foreign governments will start dealing on a day to day basis with this government

Matto Sahib said whether we have heard about the possibility of the former Governor-General and the Former Prime Minister coming to the Government. Yes, we have heard about that. There is a lot of uncertainty, but at the moment Col. Rabuka is incharge and it is with him. His pronouncements continue to be more and more racist. Now he has declared that Christianity should be the State religion and things like that. And the most serious part of it is the intention of Col Rabuka and his reactionary lot of Fijian Chiefs who really call the shots, that the constitution should be altered in such a way that the people of Indian origin, even though they are in a majority in terms of numbers, will be in a permanent minority in Parliament The figures given are that if there are 71 members, then Indians should be only 22, out of which 4 will be Muslims and 7 will be nominated by the Prime Minister and no Indian can hold the high office of either Prime Minister, or President, or Foreign Minister, or Finance Minister. So it is a very serious matter—may be a small country—and we are taking this up But all other countries in the world are beginning to accept this Now, just after this coup, the South Pacific Forum met All the South Pacific countries met and the Prime Minister of Australia proposed an Eminent Persons Group or a small sub-committee to go to Suva and discuss this, but this was opposed by other members, Papua New Guinea and others who have supported the coup At the Commonwealth we were able to have a unanimous agreement because of the stand we took and our African friends took, but the feeling of the countries of the Pacific is not the same as we have So we have to deal with this particular reality which exists and within that we want to take a principled stand —not because of people of Indian origin, if it would have been anywhere in the world we would have taken it—and that is what we have done and I think it was a considerable achievement in the face of very subtle, underground opposition to get Fiji's membership terminated. And if the Governor-General had not been compelled to resign—and here again India played a role—then this question could not have been taken up at the Vancouver Summit and for the next two years it would have been put on the backburner. We were able to force this issue and have the membership terminated, and for coming back to the Commonwealth, unless there is a radical change in the policies—the return has to be acceptable unanimously to all members, and we are not going to accept this situation—it is not possible.

There is also very great feeling among the Fijian chiefs of their link with the United Kingdom, because they had signed the agreement with Queen Victoria as her humble subjects, and they have very deep feelings for the British Crown. So, they want, somehow, to be able to put the Act together and see if they could be back in the Commonwealth But we will watch that very carefully.

Sir, I think I have dealt with the various questions that Mr Nirmal Chatterjee raised as also Malaviyaji's question about State religion I am also grateful to Mr. Aruna for what he said about what we are doing about overseas Indians As I explained it, it is a very complicated issue—the line where their being Indians begins and where their being citizens of Fiji is very narrow, as we have seen in the case of Kenya and Uganda. My humble submission would be—and this is what we have been saying—because we have been in touch with the Government of Dr. Bavadra when his party, the coalition Party, won and when he had six or seven Indian Ministers; he is a non-chief Fijian So, for the first time, the common people of Fiji, people who are not of chiefly origin, voted in that election and gave a majority to the Coalition Government So, this elected Government was ousted. We have been in touch with Dr Bavadra. His colleagues have been here; they have seen me here. They were present at Vancouver, we met them at other places also. We are trying to keep in touch with them, to keep their morale high But if there is a panic exodus of people of Indian origin from Fiji, that would be most unfortunate because that is precisely what Col Rabuka wants. If 50 to 60 thousand people leave Fiji, then the demographic balance is that Fijians will be in majority. It is a small country and out of 300,000 people if 50 to 60 thousand Indians leave, then, for all times to come the situation will be that they will be second class citizens So it is important that we should encourage them to stay

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there, stay at home They built the country, they contributed so much to it for the last 120 years, and they have a claim there. So, while I appreciate the pressure upon them and their difficulties, if they were to leave in great haste, then they would perhaps give a green signal to the coup leaders to entrench themselves for all times and to introduce the Constitution which would put the Indian community in a minority, because then they will say, in any case we are in a majority, because a small number can tilt the balance That is why I am hoping that our stout-hearted people, the people of Fiji, will fight for their democratic rights With whatever help that we can give and the world community can give, I think that the fact that the Commonwealth has disapproved of the coup and taken the stand on terminating Fiji's membership must have heartened them a great deal. If I have left any particular question unanswered, I am sorry. I have tried to give the overall picture. I merely want to say that the question of our appearing to the inactive does not arise I think India is one country which has been most active from the first day in this regard, bilaterally, within the Commonwealth, in the United Nations and even among the non-aligned countries. The fact is that it has not allowed the subtle propaganda. I mentioned to drive a wedge between India and Africa by saying that the Indians are settlers. The term was actually used in one conversation. It was said, "How does it differ? The whites are settlers in Africa. You are settlers in Fiji." It sounds very simplistic We have been able to combat them, and combat them very effectively.

I will certainly keep the House informed about further developments. We are having detailed discussions in the Ministry We have the benefit of our High Commissioner who has lived through this since the 14th of May. He came here only a few days ago If the need arises, I will certainly place further facts before the House.

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION ON DROUGHT AND FLOOD SITUATION IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

श्री शंकर सिंह वाघेला (गुजरात) : वाइस-चेयरमैन सर, देश में कई राज्यों में इस सदी का . . .

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) समय बहुत कम है ।

श्री शंकर सिंह वाघेला आप चाहें तो आप चर्चा बंद कर दीजिये ।

I am least concerned. The Govt has allowed this discussion. It is very important. All parts of the country are suffering from drought and floods, Sir

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) मैं आपको ना नहीं कहता हूं । इस पर 18 मेम्बर बोलने वाले हैं, आप बोलिये।

SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA : I have to initiate the discussion, Sir, with full details.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA (Gujarat) : Half-an-hour was taken on Fiji. So, you extend this half-an-hour

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI) . Yes, positively

श्री शंकर सिंह वाघेला वाइस चेयरमैन सर, सारे देश के कई राज्यों में इस सदी का सबसे भीषणतम और भयंकर अकाल सूखे के कारण पडा हुआ है और शेष बचे हुए राज्यों असम, बिहार और बंगाल में बाढ के कारण जो नुकसान हुआ है इस पर अल्पकालिक चर्चा की जो आपने अनुमति दी है इसके लिए मैं आपका आभार व्यक्त करते हुए बडे भारी दुखी हृदय से इस सूखे और बाढ की चर्चा प्रारम्भ करता हूं । महोदय, यह चर्चा सिर्फ चर्चा न रहे । हमारी भारत सरकार इस चर्चा में जितने भी सदस्य भाग लें और वे जो सुझाव व्यक्त करें उन सुझावों पर अमल करे, उनका अमलीकरण हो । देश के कैटल बिना पानी के और घास के मर रहे हैं, मजदूरों को